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Ten Years of Church Welfare

*Wholehearted support of welfare during time of plenty
proves blessing in time of need*

By HENRY D. MOYLE, Chairman, General Church Welfare Committee



✱

The
Church
Welfare
General
Committee
and
their
Advisors

✱

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT, and his counsellors, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and President David O. McKay, ten years ago appointed a general Church welfare committee. To-day, after ten years of experience and growth, the welfare

plan of the Church is expanding, as never before, the scope of its usefulness under the inspired and able leadership of President George Albert Smith.

President Grant gave us the general scope of the welfare plan:



President George Albert Smith.

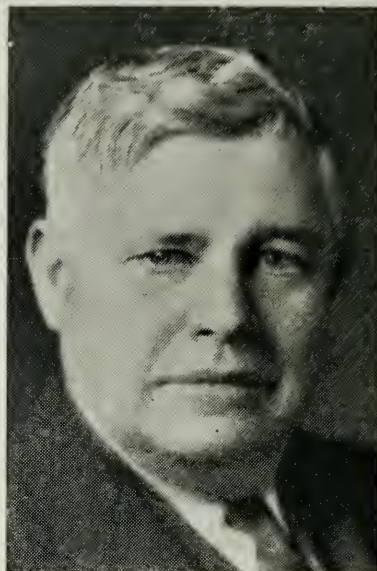
As promised at the last April conference, we inaugurated a Church security plan. To facilitate the putting into effect of the plan, we organized a general committee whose functions were to represent the Presiding Bishopric in the detailed administrative work of co-ordinating and supervising the labours of the various regularly established Church organizations in their large and important security operations. . . .

President Grant further said at that time the Church had

. . . provided for the use of existing Church organizations. The stake and ward organizations, the priesthood quorums, the Relief Society, and the various auxiliary organizations to render the maximum service . . . in the interest of the general welfare of the Church.

President Grant emphasized that the immediate objective of the programme was:

To provide by October 1, 1936, by a wholly voluntary system of gifts in cash or in kind, sufficient food, fuel, clothing, and bedding to supply through the coming winter every needy and worthy Church family, unable to furnish these for itself, in order that no member of the Church should suffer in these times of stress and emergency.



President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.

Work was to replace idleness. This was the emphatic counsel given to the Church by its then venerable leader. This has been the counsel of all the presidents of the Church from the beginning; so much so that work has become an every-day principle in the lives of worthy Latter-day Saints.

Continuing, President Grant said:

Our primary purpose is to set up, insofar as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift, and self-respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership.

The general Church welfare committee, for the past ten years, has devoted itself to the accomplishment of the two fundamental purposes of the programme as given by President Grant, and encouraged by the advisers: John A. Widtsoe, Albert E. Bowen, Thomas E. McKay, Clifford E. Young, Alma Sonne, Antoine R. Ivins, John H. Taylor, Oscar A. Kirkham, the Presiding Bishopric, and the general Relief Society presidency. The people of the Church have



President David O. McKay.

responded magnificently to the call made of them. The regions, stakes, wards, priesthood quorums, auxiliary organizations, and above all, the Relief Society organizations of the Church are to be congratulated, and are entitled to receive the grateful apprecia-

tion of the people of the Church. It would be impossible to estimate the good that has come from the time and energy given, and the contributions made to this great humanitarian project.

During the first year of its existence it contributed directly to the happiness and the security of more than twenty-five thousand Latter-day Saints. Before the winter of 1936-37 was upon us, the Church had available for its bishops, through the voluntary contributions of loyal members of the Church, sufficient money, food, fuel, clothing, and bedding to take care of the needs of all worthy members through that winter. At no time since has there been a shortage of cash or supplies, in the hands of bishops and welfare committees of the Church. So far as the general committee has been able to ascertain, no members of the Church, whose needs were known to the Church, have suffered for the necessities or the needs of life since the initiation of the programme.

To insure a similar record for the future, we have, during the past ten years, assisted in constructing and establishing, wherever a real need has appeared, ward, stake, and regional storehouses throughout the Church.



Central
Bishop's
Storehouse
in
Salt Lake
City
"Welfare
Square"

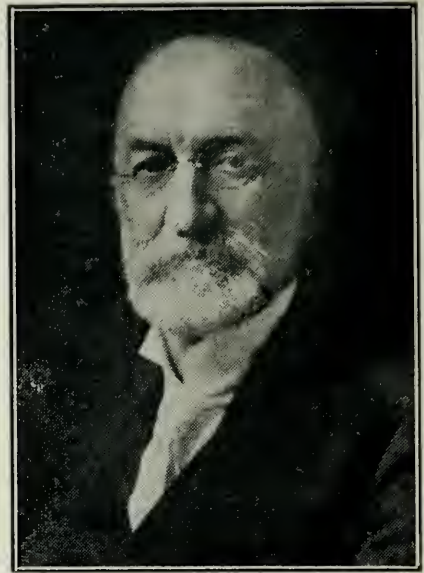




The Prophet Joseph Smith.

There are many other bishops' storehouses planned for construction, with plans drawn and money available, as soon as materials and welfare labour become available. It is the purpose of the Church to keep these storehouses supplied with food, clothing, and fuel to take care of our people's needs. Deliveries are made to those who find it difficult or impossible to visit the storehouse personally.

In this, as in all other phases of our work, the priesthood quorums assist, under the direction of the ward bishopric or the stake presidency. Stocks for these bishops' storehouses are furnished by what has become known as the Church welfare annual budget. The preparation of this budget is one of the most interesting and inspiring operations of the entire programme. The bishops of the wards survey annually their needs. To assist them in this work a card index known as the "green card" is provided. Each bishop has such a card for every family in his ward. The cards are frequently given by the bishop to the priesthood quorums, and these quorums in turn arrange for every member of the quorum to



President Heber J. Grant.

be visited, and a card for his family carefully prepared and kept current. These cards reveal not only the present needs of the families, but forecast the likelihood of need of assistance in the future. The experience, training, occupation, present employment, or lack of employment, are items of information to be found on these cards, when properly kept. Now from these cards, and from the bishop's general knowledge of the families of the ward over whom he presides, the bishop is able to forecast the needs of the ward for a year in advance, and reports his estimate to the stake, and the stake in turn to the region, and the region to the general committee.

The Presiding Bishopric, and the general committee, now prepare with care and in detail, a complete budget of the needs of the Church for a year in advance. Some of the items found on this budget follow:

Dairy and poultry products, livestock, meat, fish, jam, honey, vegetables, fruit, sugar, household supplies, miscellaneous food items, drugs, and sundries; field crops of sugar beets, wheat, barley, oats, alfalfa, cotton, and clothing for men, women, and children.

When this budget is finally approved by the First Presidency of the Church, it is then submitted to the Church for its appro-

val. When approved by the Church it is apportioned among the stakes of the Church with the consent and approval of each stake presidency and stake welfare committee. The stake committee then makes assignments to the wards, with the consent and approval of the bishops and ward welfare groups. In this latter group each priesthood quorum is represented. The quorums next approve that portion of the budget allotted to them. The assumption of responsibility thus becomes entirely voluntary.

Many wards have purchased farms or ranches from which to produce their share of the budget. Other wards rely upon priesthood quorums and individuals to produce a portion of the ward's budget. The women's Relief Society in every ward in the Church, so far as we know, have in the final analysis produced a very substantial part of this budget. To our advisers, the general presidency of the Relief Society, and to the



Harold B. Lee, Managing Director.



Harold B. Lee, President Smith, Marion G. Romney, Assistant Managing Director, and Stuart Eccles visiting the Sewing Centre at Welfare Square.

women of the Church we are very grateful.

During the production period, reports of progress are made by the local units to the general committee. When for any reason there is a failure or a likelihood of a failure to produce that which has been assigned and undertaken by any ward, the bishop reports the probable shortage to the stake presidency. In such an event, either some other ward adds to its voluntary budget commitment, or the general committee is notified, and some other stake is given the opportunity to volunteer to make up the shortage. The result has been that in every year of our experience, our budgets, approved and assumed in the foregoing manner, have been produced substantially as agreed, and have been contributed to the welfare programme.

Each ward and stake retains for itself, for its own use, that portion of its produced budget which is needed locally. Only the surplus is held subject to the order of the general committee for use elsewhere in the Church. Each welfare region of the Church, as well as practically every stake, by producing its budget becomes as nearly self-sustaining as is practicable. No local unit need draw on any other part of the Church for anything that can be produced readily near-by. The general committee is a clearinghouse for the surpluses of each region. It makes disposition of these surpluses from time to time throughout the Church, when and where needed. The entire welfare resources of the Church are thereby readily made available anywhere to meet any emergency. Bishops have no fear of meeting their commitments to the needy. The worthy can rely upon the Church administering to their wants when necessary. Our resources are ample.

Since 1936 we have rendered assistance to from seventeen thousand to fifty thousand persons a year. We are better prepared to-day than ever before to continue, and if necessary, materially increase and enlarge this essential service. As a matter of fact, we are now sending parcels to Europe. From generous contributions to relieve our brothers and sisters in the war-ravished countries, more than fourteen thousand parcels have already been sent to Holland, Belgium, France, Finland, Den-

mark, Norway, England, and Czechoslovakia. These parcels contain clothing. Some food has also been shipped. From reports of Elder Ezra Taft Benson, president of the European Mission, we know many of these parcels have arrived and have been delivered in good condition to our people. We are now busily engaged in shipping earload lots of food and clothing to each of the above named countries for distribution under President Benson's supervision. Relief to our people in Germany has been delayed because of difficulties beyond our control. President Benson has just succeeded in completing arrangements whereby we can now ship food and clothing into Germany through the Red Cross. Germany will, therefore, soon be added to the list of countries actually receiving aid from our Church, for our people.

The budget, of which we have written at length, together with the fast offerings of the Church, assures us against suffering arising from want for the necessities of life. The fast offerings, and in fact the tithing of the people, have increased along with the development of our welfare programme. Many stakes of the Church soon reached the minimum donation of one dollar per capita a year, requested by President Grant early in the welfare programme. This assignment since then has been met, or at least approximated, by all stakes during the past ten years. Contributions to our annual budget have increased the spirit of giving in the Church. The more we give the happier we are to give more. President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., very recently said:

And so we began this welfare plan, which was to do the two things: first, provide for those who needed help and, second, bring to our people the blessings which the Lord has always promised in ancient times and in modern to those who relieve the distress of others. . . .

It is rather a curious thing to me that since we began this welfare plan and since we began calling upon the Saints to give, our tithing has increased more than one hundred fifty per cent and is still on the increase.

If we all paid our tithing and if the fast were observed by all and a fast offering con-

sistent with the saving thus made were contributed to the Church, we surely would have no problem in meeting the needs of all of the unfortunate members of the Church. If we, as a people, reached such a state of perfection in our progress and development, and it should be a simple thing so to do, we would no doubt have eliminated to a great extent the need of any relief. We would likely have few, if any, to assist. We could then apply ourselves and our resources more and more to the preaching of the gospel to the nations of the earth. This we must do sooner or later. Our purpose as a Church, therefore, embraces the elimination of the causes that lead up to the necessity for relief.

We are not satisfied with the preparations above outlined for the relief required in our midst. We look upon much of our activity as temporary. Less and less relief should be required as we progress in faith and unity and in unselfishness. We are not unmindful of the fact that from the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the present time, the Church has admonished the Saints to live in such a way that there would be no poor among us, but so long as needy are in our midst, they should not suffer or find occasion to go outside the Church for needed assistance.

To ensure against idleness, we must find and make work for the unemployed. President Grant in the October conference of 1937 said:

Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated. (D. and C. 88:24.)

It is, therefore, immediately apparent that we take care of our own people within the Church, and keep them gainfully employed. President Clark beautifully outlined these purposes in the October conference of 1936, when the plan was first announced.

We have read much during this conference regarding the security plan which the Church is putting into operation. That plan has behind it two essential things, first, that we shall see that no-

body shall starve or really need for the things necessary for life; and, secondly, and just as important, that every one who can work shall have some work given to him or to her to do . . . and to say how I feel about the dignity and the honour of work. . . . Work is a great thing. It is the law of this earth. When Adam was cast out, upon him was passed the glorious sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

So long as unemployment was a problem in our midst, before the war, numerous make-work projects were initiated. It was immediately apparent that idleness was not necessary; that work could be found for those who desired to do their part rather than to have someone else do it for them. We were ready, without delay, to give to a man what he needed, if he would but give in return that of which he was capable.

On one of the most important initial make-work projects, a large building in Salt Lake City was carefully torn down. All building materials that could be salvaged were then used to build our present Central Bishops' Storehouse on Welfare Square. This work, for the most part, was done by men who would otherwise have been idle. Their only compensation was a bishop's order on the storehouse together with a small amount of cash necessary to meet their cash requirements. No two workmen were necessarily paid the same amount in cash or commodities. The circumstances of each man varied. Each workman made his needs known to the bishop at the end of the week. The bishop gave him an order for what he needed. For example: Two carpenters, one a widower whose children were all grown, had no one but himself to support; the other had a wife and a number of small children. These two men worked side by side doing the same work with substantially the same skill and energy. The latter received substantially more, in fact many times more than the former because his needs were far greater. Thus all were tided over the period of temporary unemployment.

Such actual experiences exemplify the extent to which men will go to help one another when men follow the teachings of Christ in their everyday lives.

Many make-work projects throughout the Church furnished men and women gainful employment which not only gave them temporary independence and self-respect, but also opened the way for many to permanent employment in industry and commerce. Among the make-work projects, stakes have acquired range land, pasture, and feed lots to produce and fatten beef. One hog farm alone produces three hundred fifty full-size and marketable animals a year. Three dairy projects are being successfully operated. Fruit orchards are constantly being planted and cultivated on acreage purchased for this purpose. Stakes have and are successfully operating farms as large as three hundred twenty acres. Perhaps some of the most successful welfare projects are owned and operated by the wards. On these, the bishops and ward members work shoulder to shoulder in the spirit of fine brotherhood to help one another and to provide for the needy among them. A successful soap factory has been established. Many satisfactory and efficient sewing centres, a wood-working plant producing furniture and other wood items, and canneries canning fruits, vegetables, and fish have been built throughout the Church. For example: We can salmon in the Portland and Seattle stakes and tuna fish in the San Diego Stake. Poultry projects are producing eggs for the programme. There are many individual quorum projects. The time is rapidly approaching when every stake and quorum will have permanent projects to assist in the production of the annual welfare budget as well as furnish gainful employment for our unemployed.

The immediate future may well require the initiation of other projects of a similar nature to meet unemployment problems now at our doorstep. No end of thought and effort is now being expended by the Church to meet and solve the unemployment problems we believe to be just around the corner. All welfare committees, all priesthood quorum presidencies, all bishoprics, all stake presidencies, in fact all members of the Church must assist if we are to avoid idleness and suffering incident to any future period of general unemployment. Each unit of the Church must in the final analysis solve the problems of its own

people. The general committee is continually preparing itself to assist more and more, when and where necessary. The foresight and inspiration of the individual membership of the Church and of local leaders in initiating local activities are and must continue to be the backbone of our welfare work. The welfare committees of the Church must meet regularly if we are to succeed. These committees must translate this local thought and these local ideas into immediate action.

In our Church, the individual is exalted. The Church exists for this purpose. We believe man is created in the image of the Father; that as God is, man may become. Man's individual responsibility is equally as great as his possibilities and potentialities. He must gain, however, his own exaltation in the kingdom of God by his own work, and not by that of another. He is above all else given the priesthood to magnify.

We literally believe with the Apostle James of old that "faith without works is dead." James also told us that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In this respect we make no distinction between temporal and spiritual salvation. The individual is himself responsible for both. It is, therefore, part of the welfare plan that the individual be called upon to exhaust first his own initiative, resourcefulness, and every other self-help before desiring or accepting any outside assistance from any source whatsoever. When adversity in any form overtakes the individual, his problem immediately becomes a matter of primary concern to his family. To the man, or woman, or family assuming to the fullest extent this responsibility is given the solution of their own temporal problem just as certainly as they receive a spiritual testimony of the divine origin of the work in which we are engaged through obedience to the principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

The priesthood quorums of the Church, through their regular and intimate contacts with their members, know their strength, their weaknesses, and their needs. It is within the quorum's power to assist mate-

rially in the rehabilitation of families in distress and in solving problems of unemployment. It is our firm belief that there are few, if any, families in the Church incapable of caring for their own if family unity exists. We feel certain that, with the help of priesthood quorums in the Church families could co-operatively provide for their needs without outside help, or at most now and then need only some temporary help from the bishop.

Welfare committees have been organized throughout the Church, in wards and stakes, to assist bishops and stake presidents. They assist in raising the budget requirement. They assist the individual, and in turn the family and the quorum to overcome the problems of idleness and want. They insure temporary relief when needed, but, above all, they assist in finding a permanent solution of the welfare problems by helping those in need to-day to secure gainful employment to-morrow.

President David O. McKay was inspired to say at the April conference in 1938:

Now is the time for every man to accept his responsibility and to do his duty. . . . Undoubtedly there are many causes contributing to these untoward conditions, chief of which is failure to adopt the teachings of Jesus. . . .

Instead of waiting expectantly for the government to find work for us, let us look around and see if there is not work near at hand. . . . Too many of us fail to take advantage of opportunities near at hand. . . .

With a little help from fellow-travellers quorums, or wards, he makes the grade and goes on his way in gratitude and rejoicing. . . .

Something for each to do: First: by self effort attempt to initiate work around the home and in the neighbourhood, quorums and groups rendering necessary aid whenever possible.

In our welfare work, we go inevitably from the responsibility of the individual toward himself to his duties and obligation toward his family. The Latter-day Saint family is eternal. To this fact alone we can account for the great love and devotion that exists between Latter-day Saint parents and their children. This doctrine

of eternity accounts for the building of our temples and the work performed therein for the living and the dead.

The welfare plan has not confined its purposes to securing a budget, employment, and individual independence, but has also undertaken to strengthen the family ties. The Church has been conscious that we might, as a people, be robbed of the eternal blessings assured to us through maintaining our standards. Our conception of the family is no less peculiar to the world's notions than are our religion, our beliefs, and our practices in general. We are a peculiar people. We must be vigilant in retaining our distinctiveness. This means that we cannot do as the world does religiously, socially, or economically. We are indebted to Stephen L. Richards of the Council of the Twelve for his sermon delivered in October conference of 1944. Family solidarity was his subject. He said:

I am happy to belong to a people whose concept of home and enduring family relationship lies at the very basis of human happiness here and hereafter. I have long felt that if the Prophet Joseph Smith had never made any other contribution to the world than the incomparably beautiful and satisfying principle of eternal marriage as the foundation of a good home, which, when projected into the life to come shall be the very substance of our heaven and our exaltation, he would have been entitled to a place on the very summit of man's esteem and acclaim. In all the history of the restored gospel of our Lord, no doctrine or practice has been so distinctive. It is largely because we have such faith and confidence in the perpetuity of home and family that we have built our elaborate and expensive structures—temples of God—wherein man and wife and children have been bound in an everlasting union transcending the limitations of mortal life.

For the past year or more in our welfare meetings held in connection with stake quarterly conferences throughout the Church, we have discussed with our stake presidencies and ward bishoprics and with our people, ways and means of bringing

sons and daughters closer to their parents, of retaining between parents and children the love and affection natural to this eternal relationship. Although the temptations from outside for families to do as the world does, and to argue as the world argues in support of their conduct are great, the work of the welfare committees has strengthened many families in their righteous desires to care for their own mothers and fathers without aid from outside sources. If outside assistance is necessary, they should seek and accept the same from the Church.

A review of our work during the past ten years would not be complete if reference were not made to the Church Welfare Handbook of Instructions prepared for the guidance of welfare workers, throughout the Church. On the matter immediately under discussion, we find the following:—

Ward bishops, priesthood officers, and Relief Society workers are instructed to discourage elderly members considered worthy of Church assistance . . . who are over sixty-five years of age, from applying for or accepting "Old Age Assistance."

As an aid to the individual and the family, the welfare plan teaches the habits of thrift, frugality, and economy. It teaches and admonishes us to keep out of debt. We have frequently been warned against the burden of indebtedness, and of the difficulties of interest payments. Our people have always been taught to save in times of plenty; to avoid spending for unnecessary luxuries in times of plenty; and to be insured for life's necessities out of our past savings when times grow hard; never to be extravagant or wasteful under any circumstances; always to conserve and preserve our surpluses. Generally speaking, there are few, if any, of us who cannot provide for the necessities of life for ourselves and our families. There are none of us who are able to supply all our wants. We have always been taught to do what was done in New England. President Calvin Coolidge is credited with saying that the following four things contributed greatly to the advancement of New England:

1. Eat it up.
2. Wear it out.

3. Make it do.

4. Do without.

Early in the history of the welfare plan, the families of the Church were counselled, yes, commanded, and even warned to combine foresight and vision with thrift, frugality, and economy. Every family was urged to save and store as rapidly as possible a full year's supply of food and clothing. This was in a time of plenty when there was a surplus of everything almost everywhere, when waste and extravagance were the rule rather than the exception throughout the world. The Latter-day Saints were to be the exception. Needless to say, those who heeded the warnings and accepted the foresight of our inspired leaders, and there were many who did, not only profited themselves, but indirectly helped others who were less obedient. In fact, they helped the public generally by drawing upon their own surplus stored in time of plenty rather than upon public supplies, whose shortage throughout the world called for more or less drastic rationing, of which we still have a remnant. We were told above all to store wheat, along with other articles of food and clothing. Wheat was so cheap then and readily obtainable, and there was such a surplus of wheat in the world that we heard of some instances of its being used as fuel. Many doubted the wisdom of storing such a plentiful commodity. The Church set the example and stored, in time of plenty, and when wheat was being burned and otherwise destroyed, thousands of bushels of wheat were being stored in our elevators. These elevators, you will remember, were built with welfare labour contributed or given under the welfare programme above outlined when unemployment was a problem. This wheat is now stored in these elevators for the use of the bishops throughout the Church and to relieve our people in Europe as the need therefor arises. In addition to wheat, we have produced and stored other food supplies such as potatoes and dried and canned fruits and vegetables. The Presidency of the Church also urged as early as 1937, when there was plenty, that we as individuals each supply ourselves with extra shoes and clothes for emergency use.

(Continued on page 75.)

Sunday School Sacrament Gem and Concert Recitations for July, 1946

SACRAMENT GEM.

May we forever think of Thee,
And of Thy sufferings sore,
Endured for us on Calvary,
And praise Thee ever more.

GOSPEL DOCTRINE.

For there is a time appointed for every man, according as his works shall be.

D. and C. 121:25.

GOSPEL MESSAGE.

And inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive, they shall have power after many days to accomplish all things pertaining to Zion. D. and C. 107:37.

SENIORS.

—but this much I do know, that the Lord God hath power to do all things which are according to his word. Alma 7:8.

JUNIORS.

And thus we see that they were in an awful state, and ripening for an everlasting destruction. Helaman 6:40.

INTERMEDIATE CLASSES.

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls. Proverbs 25:28.

PRIMARY.

Grant we all may seek and find
Thee, our gracious God and kind;
Heal the sick, the captive free,
Let us all rejoice in Thee.

KINDERGARTEN.

To greet each morning gladly,
Eager for the day
Of honest work and labour,
And carefree sunny play:
This is my prayer.

Branch Teacher's Message, July, 1946

TITHING

THE Lord as the creator of the heavens and the earth is the rightful owner of all that is produced thereon. The Psalmist said, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalms 24:1.) In this day the Lord has said, "I, the Lord stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine." (D. and C. 104:14.)

For the right to enjoy the use of his domain, he has requested that a tithe be paid annually upon the increase. This is God's law of revenue, and it applies to each member of his Church. The law is of ancient origin. Abraham and Melchizedek were among the first to observe it. Since their day, the Lord has frequently emphasized its importance through the prophets.

He has reproofed his people when they have failed to obey his mandate. When speaking through Malachi, he said, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, 'Wherein have we robbed thee?' In tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8.)

His denouncement of those who failed to comply with the decree was countered with an unusual promise of blessings for those who abide his law. "... prove me now herewith, said the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:10.)

This promise should not be understood to mean a material blessing alone. Tithing should not be paid with the thought of looking forward to financial prosperity as a reward. The real values that come from tithe-paying can never be measured in dollars and cents. The major benefits are spiritual in nature. To him who keeps this commandment comes an increase in the capacity of his soul through the application of the principles of faith, honesty, and generosity in his own life.

Payment of a full tithing is the only evi-

(Continued on page 75.)

The Sacredness of the Sacrament

By PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

I THINK perhaps most of us realize what a gift has come to us on those occasions when we are permitted to assemble in peace and in quiet, to meet together and partake of the emblems of the broken body and the shed blood of the Master. It should be, and I presume is, in the minds of every one of us a most sacred and solemn occasion to realize that we are renewing our covenants with him who gave his life that we might be resurrected and exalted. When we partake of these emblems, I am sure we all realize that the sacrament, established by him before he passed away, is to be to us an uplift and inspiration and a blessing throughout eternity.

I fear sometimes that as the sacrament is administered in some of our meetings there is not the solemn atmosphere that there should be. It is such a sacred privilege. I remember a long time ago President Joseph F. Smith instructed us on this subject, calling our attention to the fact that it was a blessed privilege, and that those who partook of the sacrament should have in their minds the obligation that is indicated in the prayer. It is a marvellous prayer. The blessing upon the bread and upon the water, and the Lord's prayer, are three perfect prayers that he has given us.

President Joseph F. Smith said he had noticed as he went out among the people of the Church that during the passing of the sacrament there was no particular recognition of the men who preside in the various stakes and wards, and he advised us, and we carried to the field this recommendation, that when the sacrament was administered it should be presented first to whoever was the ranking officer, indicating not his individuality but the authority and the position that he held. In the stake conferences the sacrament was administered Sunday morning and was passed first to whoever happened to be the ranking officer and then as far as possible was passed to all the congregation. He intimated to us at that time that the brethren should be seated on the stand so that it would not be

necessary to run back and forth in order to reach first one and then the others in the order of their seniority. I remember that for quite a long time this procedure was carefully observed, and it was always beautiful to me. And to children in the Sunday School it was an indication of respect for the priesthood of God, and of its various callings in their order.

I think generally the passing of the sacrament by our deacons and teachers, and the blessing of it by the priests in the various wards, is done in a pleasing manner. The young men seem to be imbued with the sacredness of their responsibility.

I think we should emphasize in our own simple and dignified way our appreciation of the beauty and privilege of partaking of the sacrament in the meetings of the Church.

From The Improvement Era.

Have You Closed The Door On Christ?—From page 76.

like the townfolk of the scriptural report and be more concerned about our property and how to get more. We may place business, or pleasure, or social position first in our lives, or in many other ways we may "beseech the Lord to depart out of our midst."

But what do we do? Are we not then classing ourselves with the foolish virgins whose lamps were without oil, or with the man who built his house upon the sand, and it fell?

Most men seek the abundant and the happy life, but being blinded by their desires they think to get it by ignoring the Provider of the things they seek. They forget that the Lord knows what each one needs. The good things of the earth are promised not to the disobedient, but to those who are willing to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, having faith in the promise that "all these things shall be added unto them."

Deseret News—Church Section.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

As no Highlights were printed in the last issue we include some April items here as a matter of record.

Transvaal District:

Norman G. Muir, President, 119, Kitchener Avenue, Bez Valley, Johannesburg.

Much satisfaction has been expressed at the recent visit of our Mission Authorities, and the very fine spirit of our District Conference which has been acclaimed "highly successful both from the point of view of a spiritual feast and also for attendance." During the Conference, Mission President Sharp blessed two babies—Brian Garry Robinson, son of Brother Bob and Sister Doreen Robinson, and Anna Catherina Magietha Brummer, daughter of Brother and Sister J. P. Brummer. Brother Bernie Hubert and Brother J. Melverton Jakins were ordained Elders by President June B. Sharp and Evan P. Wright, and Donovan Lincoln Donly was ordained a Deacon by his father, Brother Francis M. Donly. The Conference theme was "Exaltation through obedience to the Gospel." Fine discourses and instructions were given and renewed desires were expressed for increased faithfulness. The District Presidency appreciate the willing efforts of all officers, teachers and members for their part in making the Conference a fine success.

Krugerdsdorp Branch:

David Banfield, President,
23, Sterkfontein Road.

A Branch meeting was held in the home of Mrs. Theron, Sunday morning, April 21st, with about 25 in attendance. An Officers' and Teachers' Meeting was held in the afternoon at the home of Edna Kewney.

Springs Branch:

Reaford Futter, President, 67, 5th Street.

In Springs as many members were visited by the Mission Authorities as time would permit. Branch meeting was held Sunday evening, April 21st. An Officers' and Teachers' Meeting Monday evening at the home of Brother and Sister Johan Sternmet, and an interesting Cottage Meeting on Tuesday evening in the home of Brother and Sister Hancock. 25 mem-

bers were in attendance and the discussions were profitable and interesting. Niel Hancock is making splendid improvement, recovering from a very serious head operation. By telegram we learn of the arrival of a fine baby boy in the home of Brother and Sister I. C. Louw; our hearty congratulations. Brother J. Duncan, of Brakpan, had a serious accident in Johannesburg. He was knocked down by a tram-car and was confined to hospital for several days. April 28th, Winsome H. Jakins was set apart as Branch Organist and Branch Clerk.

North-West Branch:

William H. Brummer, President,
67, Albert Road, Newlands, Johannesburg.

The Branch Conference was a most unusual occasion. A very rich spiritual meeting was held in Ferndale and the best attendance for many months, 46 of the 61 members of the Branch being present. Preparations were also made for the organization of the North-West Branch Relief Society and we extend very best wishes for the success of the new organization.

Pretoria Branch:

George Ganter, President.

With definite plans of moving to Pretoria having been completed Brother George Ganter was sustained as President of the Branch and Brother Oliver Cowdery First Counsellor and Sister Cowdery to continue as Branch Clerk. While in Pretoria President Sharp blessed and named Rodney Bryne Jones, infant son of Mr. Matthew G. and Joyce Cooksley Jones. A well-attended Branch meeting was held.

Lialhona Branch:

Ariel T. Smith, President,
61, Victoria Street, Rosettenville,
Johannesburg.

At a baptismal service under the direction of the Lialhona Presidency was held at Ramah. Duane Jakins was baptized on his tenth birthday by his father, R. B. Jakins, and confirmed by his uncle, Deryck Vee. Jean Charsley spent a delightful holiday in Durban. Branch meetings were held with the Mission Authorities at the home of Brother and Sister Stark.

Ramah Branch:

Frank Donly, President,
387, Highland Road, Kensington,
Johannesburg.

During the Conference week visits were made to the homes of nearly all the members by the Mission Authorities. Sister Elsie Nielson, of Pietermaritzburg, was a welcome visitor at Ramah and in the home of her sister, Mabel Donly. Richard Ninow fractured both wrists by falling from a tree at the Branch Picnic during April; Arlene Phipson also had her arm in splints due to a fall at school; they have both completely recovered. Ramah Branch has again become very active in a building fund drive.

A strong committee has been appointed and we wish them every success. We are hoping to see a fine new building there in the not too distant future. Friday, April 19th, John Baker, father of Sister Kitty Smith, died and funeral services were conducted for him by the Ramah Branch Presidency.

Durban Branch:

Louis Duncan, President,
187, Montpelier Road.

Members who have been on holiday in Durban lately are Sister Edith Wiid, of Cape Town, Brother and Sister Evan P. Wright and children from Johannesburg, and Melvie and Winsome Jakins and son from Springs Branch. Deryck Arthur Greene, the infant son of Mr. and Sister W. E. J. Greene, died April 14th, 1946, of diphtheria. Brother Harry Spear has been released from military hospital and is vacationing in Bloemfontein with his folks. District Conference was held May 12th and a mothers' day programme was the feature of the morning session. Brother Louis Duncan will be away from Durban during June and July on business trips. The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. David Henry Hancock was blessed by Brother Louis L. Duncan and given the name of David Merwyn Hancock. In Pietermaritzburg part of the day, May 9th, was enjoyably spent visiting with Sister Elsie Nielson and Sister Eunice L. Fountain and friends. Sister McCathie spent a month visiting a niece at Underberg. In Ladysmith and Besters visits were made to the home of the Kukard and Doyle families.

East London:

B. A. T. Jubber, 5, Nahoon View Road,
Southernwood.

Recently the announcement was made of the engagement of Lance Jubber and June Broster, of East London. We wish them every joy and happiness. A Branch meeting was held at the home of Bro. and Sister Toughey and visits made to the homes of the members. Brother and Sister Ernest Clark and family, of Jagersfontein, spent a holiday in East London and Nurse Lily Clark, of East London, returned to Jagersfontein with her parents. Brother B. A. T. Jubber returned to East London recently after spending several weeks visiting relatives in Rhodesia.

Port Elizabeth:

Robert K. F. Doller, President,
18, Caithness Road, Walmer.

Sister Smith has recently received word from her daughter, Vera Smith Lawton, telling of her safe arrival in New York and that she is enjoying life in her new home. During April, Brother and Sister Everton and family visited his mother in Grahams-town.

Cape District:

Dan Cherret, President,
14, Serpentine Road, Pinelands.

Two Sunday visits of the District Presidency to Hermanus have been made. On the second visit two meetings were held. A Sunday School at the holiday home of the Fouries' at 10.30 a.m. and a baptismal service during the afternoon at which Wilford Woodruff van Molendorff and Yvonne Valentine van Molendorff were baptized and confirmed. Other meetings of the District officers include a meeting at the Stemmet home in Robertson, the Herbst home in Paarl and the Epping Garden Village services with 24 in attendance. Brother Peter Gilmour was the speaker at Epping Garden Village.

Mowbray Branch:

Alvin Park, President,
"St. George's Villa," Forest Road,
Rondebosch.

On April 10th, Brother Thomas Wilson and Sister Jane Jawson were married at Cumorah by President June B. Sharp in the presence of relatives and close friends. The marriage was followed by a dinner and

theatre party. During the month they spent a delightful time at Hermanus. Brother and Sister Thomas Y. Wilson spent their Easter vacation at Hermanus. Very interesting programmes were given on Mothers' Day and Easter Sunday. Semi-monthly dances are being successfully conducted in Cumorah's Recreation Hall. Sister Elizabeth Sprungman died 2nd May at the Conradie Home, 78 years of age, and on May 9th Sister Julia Woodbine passed away at the home of her daughter, Sister Ida Kehl. She was 81 years old. Services were held at Cumorah for these two Sisters under the direction of the Branch Presidency.

From Salt Lake City, April 12, a cablegram made known the death of Rebecca Ann Bennion Sharp, 93 years of age. She is the mother of our Mission President. Her entire life was a life devoted to the work of the Church.

Branch Teacher's Message.—From page 71.

dence of our acceptance of, and appreciation for, this divine law. It is an honest obligation that can be discharged in no other way. Failure to so acknowledge it jeopardizes the right to enjoy the promise of temporal and spiritual blessings.

To him, however, whose faith has led him to obey this sacred injunction will come an increase in joy, spiritual power, and influence. The benefits are not confined to the individual. A father who pays tithing makes it possible for his wife and children to share the Lord's benediction with him.

Although the Lord has given this commandment, he does not enforce it. Observance comes not by way of coercion, but "out of the abundance of the heart." Righteousness cannot be legislated; it is born of a sincere desire to do God's will. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things." (Matt. 12:35.) "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." (Col. 3:23.) He who rises above selfishness and gives from the goodness of a generous heart will never lack for the assurance of God's love. The "windows of heaven" are never closed to such a man.

From *The Improvement Era*.

Ten Years of Church Welfare.—From page 70.

We also have a flour mill to grind the wheat into flour and to produce feed for our poultry and livestock. Much wheat and other food products, as well as clothing, are likewise stored on the farms and in the homes of our people throughout the Church. They have one year's supply on hand. Now, when there is an alarming scarcity of wheat in the world, we realize beyond doubt the inspiration, vision, foresight, and wisdom of our leaders in initiating this great programme ten years ago, when there was neither shortage nor dream of shortage in the world. We hope some of our wheat reaches our distressed and hungry brothers and sisters in Europe. To this end we are now striving. How wonderful it is to be obedient! The blessings that flow therefrom are innumerable. The beautiful words of Paul immediately come to mind:

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.

No Church activity ever called for greater faith and loyalty to the leaders of the Church, the servants of God, than has this programme. From the beginning of our work, as a general committee, we have proceeded only so far as we have been directed by the Presidency of the Church.

Our leaders are men of God, inspired to lead us in the paths of righteousness, temporarily and spiritually. Our greatest security, after all, lies in following their counsel and in seeking the Lord prayerfully in all things.

The general Church welfare committee celebrates its tenth anniversary this April conference confronted with greater problems, greater faith, greater confidence, and greater determination to press on more loyally in the service of the Master than ever before.

From *The Improvement Era*.

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The whole significance of our being is that we are made imperfect, and are called upon to be perfect.—Salter, Church Section, *Deseret News*.

Have You Closed The Door On Christ?

SOME among the Jews of ancient times were possessed of devils and had every appearance of being violently insane. Two such who were described as being so "fierce that no man might pass that way" lived among the tombs in a cemetery.

When these two saw Jesus they cried out to him, addressed him by name and asked "art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The devils apparently knowing the Lord would east them out, asked permission to enter a nearby herd of swine. When permission was granted, the devils did enter the swine which thereupon ran violently into the sea.

The tenders of the swine fled, and running into the city told all that had happened. Then the townsfolk came out to Jesus and "they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts."

The reader of the scripture wonders at the action of these people in asking the Saviour to leave their community. Here he was—the Creator of Heaven and Earth, the Son of the Highest, the Prince of Peace. Angels had sung praises at his birth, and afterward ministered to him. His Father had spoken from heaven acknowledging him as his son. He had raised the sick, had stilled the storm just off their coasts, and now ended a community menace by casting devils out of two men who had been so fierce, people were afraid to approach the burial place of their own loved ones. And yet they asked him to go away. What a contrast to the attitude of the multitudes across the lake who clamoured for him, followed him wherever he went, and had their sick healed and were fed miraculously.

No doubt the inhabitants of this community would have welcomed him had they really known his identity, but they gave him no time to tell them or to teach them. Yet he had done enough to have attracted the attention of any group. He had performed a great miracle, had east devils out of two fierce men who had menaced their community and had thereby bestowed a great favour upon the townsfolk, as well as the two who were healed. But apparently

they were more concerned about something else. They might have stopped to inquire by what power he performed these miracles. There were various witnesses who might have advised them, yet such a thing seemed not to interest them. Something nearer their hearts had been taken from them. Were they not partially dependent for their living upon their swine herds, one of which had been crazed and drowned? Might this man do some other thing to bring them loss? Should they risk any further property? No! Away with him, and no questions asked. And thus did they allow their love of property to blind them, and in their blindness they drove from their shores their greatest Benefactor. They were moved by the spirit of the silversmiths who said concerning Paul, "Our craft is in danger."

How many have shut the door on opportunity! And the greatest of all opportunities which they shut out is that which townsfolk shunned, the enjoyment of the Gospel of Christ.

The rejection of this opportunity comes in many ways. There are those who do as the lakeshore dwellers in Palestine—and actually ask the servants of God to stay away from their cities, even nations have done so, closing their doors to the elders. Individuals have slammed their doors in the faces of the emissaries of truth. Some have asked Ward Teachers to discontinue their visits. Others refuse to have their children baptized, saying they wish their boys and girls to wait until they are grown before giving them any religious education.

But there are other ways of closing the door on Christ. We may do it by not accepting the guidance of the leadership of the Church, preferring to go our own way. We may do it by refusing to keep the commandments. We may do it by not teaching our children to pray, to observe the Word of Wisdom, the Sabbath Day, and the law of Tithe. We may do so by saying that it is old fashioned to go to church, or by being as the world, and loving worldly rather than spiritual things. We may feel

(Continued on page 72.)